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Anti-Trump GOP voters mostly loyal in 2022, but not entirely

By HANNAH FINGERHUT
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rep. Lauren Boebert's grip on Colorado's 3rd Congressional District didn't seem in question heading into last year's midterms. But in the end, the congresswoman who gained a national reputation as a combative member of the "Make America Great Again" movement won reelection by just 564 votes.

"This was supposed to be a slam dunk for the Republican candidate, the way the district is designed," said Don Coram, a former state senator who unsuccessfully challenged Boebert in the GOP primary last June.

Boebert's near miss was emblematic of the difficulties Republicans confronted in 2022 and may face again in 2024. While former President Donald Trump holds a tight grasp on much of the GOP base, there is a notable minority of Republican voters who do not consider themselves MAGA members.

Most of them, as faithful Republicans, backed GOP candidates in 2022, AP VoteCast shows.



People attending the Conservative Political Action Conference, CPAC 2023, sing the national anthem during the opening session, at the National Harbor, in Oxon Hill, Md., Thursday, March 2, 2023.

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Associated Press

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Pence says Trump ‘endangered my family’ on Jan. 6

By **ZEKE MILLER** and **CHRIS MEGERIAN**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Vice President Mike Pence on Saturday harshly criticized former President Donald Trump for his role in the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol, widening the rift between the two men as they prepare to battle over the Republican nomination in next year’s election.

“President Trump was wrong,” Pence said during remarks at the annual white-tie Gridiron Dinner attended by politicians and journalists. “I had no right to overturn the election. And his reckless words endangered my family and everyone at the Capitol that day, and I know history will hold Donald Trump ac-



Former Vice President Mike Pence speaks at a Coolidge and the American Project luncheon in the Madison Building of the Library of Congress, Feb. 16, 2023, in Washington. **Associated Press**

said in his Gridiron Dinner remarks. “And it mocks decency to portray it any other way.”

Trump, meanwhile, has continued to spread lies about his election loss. He’s even spoken in support of the rioters and said he would consider pardoning them if he was reelected.

Speeches at the Gridiron Dinner are usually humorous affairs, where politicians poke fun at each other, and Pence did plenty of that as well.

He joked that Trump’s ego was so fragile, he wanted his vice president to sing “Wind Beneath My Wings” — one of the lines is “did you ever know that you’re my hero?” — during their weekly lunches.

He took another shot at Trump over classified documents.

“I read that some of those classified documents they found at Mar-a-Lago were actually stuck in the president’s Bible,” Pence said. “Which proves he had absolutely no idea they were there.”

Even before the dinner was over, Pence was facing criticism for his jokes about Transportation Secretary Buttigieg, the first openly gay Cabinet member in U.S. history.

Pence mentioned that, despite travel problems that were plaguing Americans, Buttigieg took “maternity leave” after he and his husband adopted newborn twins.

“Pete is the only person in human history to have a child and everyone else gets post-partum depression,” Pence said. □

countable.”

Pence’s remarks were the sharpest condemnation yet from the once-loyal lieutenant who has often shied away from confronting his former boss. Trump has already declared his candidacy. Pence has not, but he’s been laying the groundwork to run.

In the days leading up to Jan. 6, 2021, Trump pressured Pence to overturn President Joe Biden’s election victory as he presided over the ceremonial certification of the results. Pence refused, and when rioters stormed the Capitol, some chanted that they wanted to “hang Mike Pence.”

The House committee that investigated the attack said in its final report that “the President of the United States had riled up a mob that hunted his own Vice President.”

With his remarks, Pence solidified his place in a broader debate within the Republican Party over how to view the attack. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, for example, recently provided Tucker Carlson with an archive of security camera footage from Jan. 6, which the Fox News host has used to downplay the day’s events and promote conspiracy theories.

“Make no mistake about it, what happened that day was a disgrace,” Pence

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Anti-Trump GOP voters mostly loyal in 2022, but not entirely

Continued from Front

Still, the extensive national survey finds these Republicans made up a larger percentage of those who opted not to support a candidate in House races. A sliver of them showed their opposition to Trump for a second time, backing Democrat Joe Biden for president in 2020 and Democratic House candidates in 2022.

In a political climate where competitive elections are nationalized and decided by narrow margins, neither party can take these voters for granted.

Democrat Adam Frisch said he knew there was a "fairly unique" opening for a more conservative Democrat to connect with Colorado voters who did not like Boebert's aggressive political style.

"I spent most of my time trying to convince people I was a safe enough choice, not just to leave the ballot blank ... but actually vote for a non-Republican for the first time ever or in a really long time," said Frisch, who has already announced he will run again in 2024.

The findings suggest Democrats, too, may need to be wary of the messaging against "MAGA Republicans," whom Biden hammered repeatedly before the November elections and is poised to do again



Rep. Lauren Boebert, R-Colo., speaks during a House Committee on Natural Resources hearing on America's Energy and Mineral potential, Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2023, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

in a 2024 campaign. Most of those who don't identify with the movement don't seem to find that compelling. Voters who do may be eager to revert to a Republican candidate who represents their traditional conservative values.

Republican strategist Alex Conant suggested GOP candidates cannot count on these voters so long as Trump is involved in politics. But 2024 can be different.

"There's no reason that the Republican nominee in 2024 can't put together a coalition that includes Trump's base and moderate Republicans and independents," he said.

Conant and others pointed to examples of Republican governors — Ron DeSantis in Florida, Mike DeWine in Ohio and Brian Kemp in Georgia — who were able

to do that in 2022.

In Ohio and Georgia, for example, the two governors outperformed Republican candidates for Senate who were endorsed by Trump. DeWine earned nearly 390,000 votes more than JD Vance, who won an open seat, and Kemp received 200,000-plus more votes in the general election than did Herschel Walker, who failed to unseat a Democratic incumbent in a later runoff.

According to VoteCast, 10% of Republican voters who don't identify as "MAGA Republicans" voted for Democratic House candidates nationwide, compared with 2% of those who embrace that label. Overall, 4% of Republicans backed Democratic candidates.

That percentage swelled in

competitive races for Senate and governor where far-right candidates were on the ballot, including as many as 13% of Republicans in Arizona, 16% in Colorado and 18% in Pennsylvania, and 11% in Michigan.

The Lincoln Project, a conservative group that staunchly opposes Trump, has targeted this voting bloc in elections. Co-founder Rick Wilson said it's a "narrow pathway, but a meaningful one" to electing pro-democracy, anti-extremist candidates, one that he thinks has expanded since 2020 because of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade.

Still, partisanship can be "sticky," Wilson said, and traditional Republicans value checks and balances in Washington, driving disaffected conservative voters to support Republicans as an offset to Democrats.

VoteCast shows most Republicans voted for Republicans, even if they did so with reservations.

Republicans who don't identify with the MAGA movement and decided to back Republican candidates mostly say they didn't consider Trump, good or bad, when they voted. Only about half are positive in ratings of Trump himself, but most are favorable toward the party and say the GOP tends to try

to do what's right. About two-thirds of them say they voted to show opposition to Biden.

"They're where I am ... what choice do we have?" said GOP strategist Rick Tyler. "There are many in the Republican Party who would love to not vote Republican, but they can't vote Democrat because they don't believe in where Democrats want to take the country."

In November, then-state Sen. Jen Kiggans defeated two-term Democratic Rep. Elaine Luria in a district centered in Virginia Beach, Virginia, just two years after a Democratic presidential candidate carried the city for the first time since 1964. Kiggans overcame the self-proclaimed "MAGA candidate" in the Republican primary, and campaign operatives pointed to Kiggans as a "disciplined" candidate focused on kitchen table issues.

Her message also tied Luria to Biden and then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., as Luria herself campaigned on her role on the House committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol and called Kiggans an election denier. Kiggans shied away from explicitly repeating Trump's false claims that the 2020 presidential election was stolen, but she refused to publicly reject them. □

Scientists: Hawaii's Kilauea not erupting, reversing warning

HONOLULU (AP) — Hawaii's second-largest volcano is not erupting, scientists said in an update to a previous warning.

The U.S. Geological Survey said in a statement late Saturday that seismic activity beneath the summit of Kilauea "has returned to background levels, ground deformation has stabilized, and no lava has been observed at the surface."

The statement cautioned "another intrusion or resumption may occur in the near future with little or no

warning."

The agency previously said a shallow earthquake storm signaled "resumption of eruptive activity at Kilauea summit is likely imminent." Scientists said Tuesday that lava had stopped flowing after 61 days of volcanic activity.

Kilauea, one of the world's most active volcanos, erupted from September 2021 to last December. A 2018 Kilauea eruption destroyed more than 700 residences.

For about two weeks last

December, Hawaii's biggest volcano, Mauna Loa, also was erupting on Hawaii's Big Island.

The dual eruptions of Hawaii's biggest volcanos provided a temporary boost to tourism during the slow season.

Volcanic eruptions have deep spiritual and cultural significance for Native Hawaiians. When Mauna Loa started erupting in November after lying dormant for 38 years, many Hawaiians took part in cultural traditions such as singing,



This photo provided by the U.S. Geological Survey shows the inside of the summit crater of the Kilauea Volcano, Jan. 6, 2023.
Associated Press

chanting and dancing to honor Pele, the deity of volcanoes and fire, and

leaving offerings known as "hookupu." □

8 dead after smuggling boats capsize off San Diego coast

By **ELLIOT SPAGAT** and **GREGORY BULL**

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — At least eight people were killed when two migrant smuggling boats capsized in shallow but treacherous surf amid heavy fog, authorities said Sunday, marking one of the deadliest maritime human smuggling operations ever off of U.S. shores. A Spanish-speaking woman on one of the panga-style boats called 911 Saturday night to report the other vessel overturned in waves at Black's Beach, authorities said. She said there were 15 people on the capsized vessel and eight on hers.

Coast Guard and San Diego Fire-Rescue crews pulled bodies of eight adults from the water, but fog hampered the search for additional victims. Recovery efforts resumed Sunday but no additional bodies were found.

Survivors may have escaped on land, including the woman who called 911. Authorities did not know her whereabouts.

San Diego Lifeguard Chief James Gartland said rescuers found the two boats overturned in shallow waters when they arrived. Surf was modest, with swells around 3 feet (about 1 meter), but skies were foggy



Two boats, one overturned, sit on Blacks Beach, Sunday, March 12, 2023, in San Diego.

Associated Press

and black.

"That area is very hazardous, even in the daytime," Gartland said at a news conference. "It has a series of sandbars and in-shore rip currents, so you can think that you can land in some sand or get to waist-high, knee-high water and think that you're able to be safe to exit the water, but there's long, in-shore holes. If you step into those holes, those rip currents will pull you along the shore and back out to sea."

Black's Beach is about 15 miles (24 kilometers) north of downtown San Diego

in a secluded area not far from the popular La Jolla Shores. Its reputation for some of the best breaks in Southern California draws many surfers.

Hundreds of maritime smuggling operations occur every year off California's coast and sometimes turn fatal. In May 2021, a packed boat carrying migrants capsized and broke apart in powerful surf along the rocky San Diego coast, killing three people and injuring more than two dozen others.

Smuggling off the California coast has ebbed and

flowed over the years but has long been a risky alternative for migrants to avoid heavily guarded land borders. Pangas enter from Mexico in the dead of night, sometimes charting hundreds of miles north. Recreational boats try to mix in unnoticed with fishing and pleasure vessels during the day.

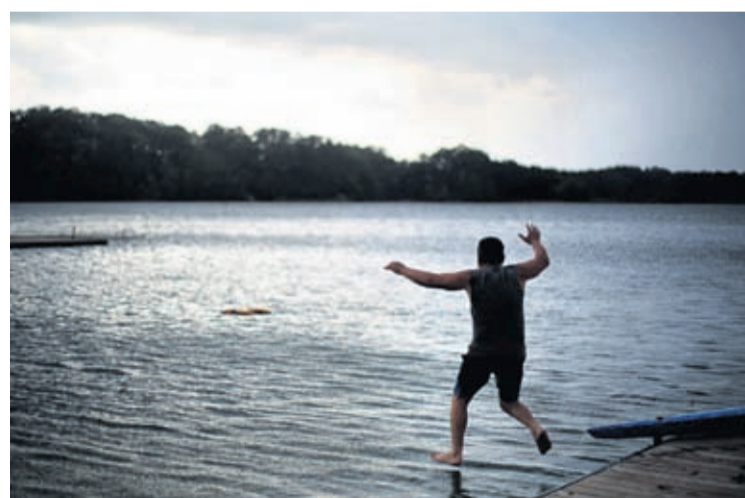
South of the U.S. border, there are many secluded, private beaches with gated entrances between high-rises with magnificent ocean views, some only partially built because funds dried up during con-

struction. Popotla, a fishing hamlet where narrow streets are lined with vendors selling a wide variety of local catch, is favored among smugglers for its large, sandy beach and relatively gentle waves.

At least some of Saturday's victims were Mexican, according to the consulate in San Diego, but how many was unknown. Illegal crossings have soared under President Joe Biden, with many migrants turning themselves in to Border Patrol agents and being released in the United States to pursue their cases in immigration court.

A pandemic rule scheduled to end May 11 denies migrants a chance to seek asylum on grounds of preventing the spread of COVID-19 but enforcement has fallen disproportionately on Mexicans, Hondurans, Guatemalans and El Salvadorans because those have been the only nationalities that Mexico agreed to take back.

As a result, people of those four countries have been more likely to try to elude capture, knowing they are likely to be expelled under the public health rule, known as Title 42 authority. Mexico recently began taking back Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans and Venezuelans under Title 42. □



Radko Jonas jumps into the water to retrieve a life vest that blew away as rain clouds approach at Lake Lanier on July 19, 2016, in Gainesville, Ga.

Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Ga. (AP) — Federal officials are pausing a plan that could lead to new names for Georgia's Lake Lanier and Buford Dam after locals objected

to changing the monikers of landmarks now named for Confederate soldiers.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued a statement Friday announcing

Federal officials pause plan to rename Georgia's Lake Lanier

the pause pending further guidance from the Department of the Army.

U.S. Rep. Andrew Clyde, a Republican who represents much of northeast Georgia, said he called the Corps of Engineers Friday to express opposition. He said the pause is a "a tremendous victory" and that "renamings would have attempted to rewrite history, impose massive burdensome costs on our community, and create unnecessary mass confusion."

Lake Lanier is an enormous reservoir spanning almost 58 square miles (150 square kilometers) and impound-

ing the Chattahoochee River northeast of Atlanta. It was named for poet Sidney Lanier when it was built after World War II. Lanier served as a private in the Confederate army and later wrote "Song of the Chattahoochee," a poem about the river.

Buford Dam is named after the nearby town of Buford, which takes its name from Lt. Col. Algernon Sidney Buford, who served in the Virginia militia during the Civil War. The Georgia town is named after Buford because he became president of a railroad that helped create the town af-

ter the war.

Hours before announcing the pause in the renaming process, The Times of Gainesville reported that the Mobile District of the Corps of Engineers sent out a news release and unveiled a website seeking input and aiming to pick new names by year's end. The corps said it was following a 2021 federal law which governs renaming military bases christened for confederates, including Georgia's Fort Gordon and Fort Benning. Fort Gordon is becoming Fort Eisenhower, while Fort Benning is becoming Fort Moore. □

Italy estimates 680K migrants might cross sea from Libya

By FRANCES D'EMILIO

Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Intelligence reports indicate nearly 700,000 migrants are in Libya awaiting an opportunity to set out by sea toward Italy, a lawmaker from Premier Giorgia Meloni's far-right party said Sunday, but a U.N. migration official called the number not credible.

Tommaso Foti, the lower parliamentary house whip for the Brothers of Italy Party, told television channel Tgcom24 the Italian secret services estimated that 685,000 migrants in Libya, many of them in detention camps, were eager to sail across the central Mediterranean Sea in smugglers' boats.

Separately, 30 migrants were missing and 17 were rescued some 100 nautical miles (180 kilometers) from Libya's coast after their boat overturned while a commercial vessel was trying to take them aboard, the Italian coast guard reported Sunday night.

Stressing that the capsizing happened outside Italy's area of search-and-rescue responsibility, the coast guard said several other merchant vessels were helping to look for the boat's missing passengers. The humanitarian group Alarm Phone signaled to Italy's national coordination center and to Libyan and Maltese authorities on Saturday that the boat with 47 people on board needed assistance.

Libyan authorities, citing "lack of naval assets availability," contacted the Rome-based maritime aid coordination center, which sent a satellite message about an emergency to all ships in the area, according to the Italian coast guard statement.

It said the commercial motorboat that took on the 17 survivors was headed for Italy but would first stop in Malta to disembark two people in urgent need of medical care. A spokesperson for the Libyan coast guard did not respond to a request for comment.

Meloni is hoping a Europe-



Police check a fishing boat with some 500 migrants in the southern Italian port of Crotone, early Saturday, March 11, 2023.

Associated Press

an Union meeting later this month yields concrete solidarity from fellow leaders of EU nations in managing the large numbers of migrants and asylum-seekers who come to countries on the Mediterranean's rim, including Greece, Cyprus, Malta and Spain as well as Italy.

"Europe can't look the other way," Foti said.

While the intelligence services assessment sparked alarming headlines in Italy, a spokesperson for the International Organization for Migration cautioned that the figure appeared to be confusing the high end of the estimated number of migrants in Libya with those who were actually seeking to head from there to Europe.

"This number seems to be an estimate, that we also give, of the total presence in Libya," Flavio Di Giacomo told The Associated Press in Rome.

But of that number "only a minimum part want to leave and only a minimum part succeeds in leaving" for Europe, Di Giacomo said. For example, many migrants in Libya come from Niger and Chad, two African nations on Libya's southern border, and eventually return to their homelands, he said.

The Italian intelligence service's estimate "is the last of a long series of alarms that we've seen in the last 10, 12

years, that turned out to be mistaken" Di Giacomo said. "That number doesn't seem to be absolutely credible." Some 105,000 migrants reached Italy by sea in 2022.

From the start of this year through March 10, some 17,600 arrived, including a few thousand who disembarked at Italian ports in the last several days. That's about triple the number for the same time period in each of the two previous years, although the COVID-19 pandemic might have led to fewer voyages. On Sunday, three more bodies were found from a Feb. 26 shipwreck just offshore the Italian peninsula, raising the known death toll in that disaster to 79 migrants, Italian state TV said. A wooden boat that had sailed from Turkey ran into sandbank in rough seas off a beach in Calabria, the toe of the Italian peninsula. There were 80 survivors, and an undetermined number of people were believed to be missing and presumed dead.

Meloni's government has rebuffed criticism that the coast guard should have been sent out to rescue the boat's passengers when the vessel first was spotted farther off the coast.

For years, Italy has tried with limited success to induce Libya to stop launches of people smugglers' unseaworthy fishing boats and

rubber dinghies toward Italian shores. Italian governments have trained and equipped the Libyan coast guard.

But the traffickers behind the smuggling rings continue to operate amid Libya's amid feuding political and militant factions.

The International Organization for Migration and humanitarian groups say passengers whose vessels are turned back by the Libyan coast guard often are returned to detention camps, where they are at risk of abuse, including torture, until their families raise enough money for the migrants to set out again by sea.

Meloni's government has made it harder for humanitarian organizations that operate rescue boats to carry out many rescues in the waters off Libya, adopting rules that force the vessels to disembark migrants in northern Italian ports, delaying their return to sea.

However many migrants actually set out from Libya on smugglers' boats, it "is a worrisome humanitarian flow because people die at sea," said IOM spokesperson Di Giacomo.

The U.N. migration agency estimates that some 300 people have died this year, or were missing and presumed dead, after attempting to cross the perilous central Mediterranean route. □

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Tropical Cyclone Freddy hammers Mozambique for second time

By WANJOHI KABUKURU

Associated Press

MOMBASA, Kenya (AP) —

Record-breaking Cyclone Freddy made its second landfall in Mozambique Saturday night, pounding the southern African nation with heavy rains and disrupting transport and telecommunications services. French weather agency Météo-France warned of "destructive and devastating" winds and "dangerous seas and heavy rains" that could lead to landslides. It said Freddy will go further inland through the weekend, generating heavy rains in Mozambique and southern Malawi, with rain also likely in Zimbabwe and Zambia. It's the second time Freddy has hit the country, with the cyclone originally making landfall late last month. Météo-France also raised concerns that Freddy is unlikely to weaken over land in the coming week and has a high probability of exiting back into the sea. Freddy made landfall with maximum wind speeds at sea measuring 155 kilometers (around 100 miles) an hour and sea gusts averaging 220 kilometers (around 140 miles) an hour, the agency said.

Freddy was initially on course to make landfall in the country Friday night but stalled over the Mozambique channel. The



Trees are strewn across a street in Quelimane, Mozambique, Saturday, March 11, 2023.

Associated Press

cyclone then intensified on Saturday and regained strength as it barreled toward land, Mozambique's National Institute of Meteorology said.

The cyclone's second punch is showering a low-lying, vast land teeming with rivers and "almost all of them have no dam" to ease flooding, said Salomao Bandeira, a scientist at Mozambique's Universidade Eduardo Mondlane. Flooding in the country earlier this year slammed regions where major rivers are controlled by dams, allowing some degree of control, Bandeira said, rais-

ing fears this hit could lead to more destruction.

The projected deluge is already worrying health and disaster agencies in both Mozambique and Malawi, who have recently been battling cholera cases and other water-borne ailments. The U.N. and EU-led disaster alert system has already issued a red alert projecting that some 2.3 million people will be impacted. Mozambique's disaster institute has moved thousands of people to storm shelters in anticipation.

"More lives are being saved in Mozambique today" due to early preparedness, Ban-

deira said.

In a statement released Saturday, Malawi Red Cross said it had activated its early response teams in southern Malawi to prepare for the cyclone. Earlier in the week, Freddy's longevity and baffling trajectories caused the U.N. weather agency to set up a committee to determine whether it has broken the record as the longest-lasting tropical cyclone in recorded history after traversing more than 8,000 kilometers (5,000 miles) in the southern Indian Ocean.

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-

istration said Freddy has already catapulted into the record books for the second-ever highest accumulated cyclone energy, or ACE, a measurement of a cyclone's energy over time. Freddy is also the third storm on record to last more than 22 days, said NOAA's Carl Schreck. Hurricane John in 1994 and an unnamed Atlantic hurricane in 1899 are the other two. The natural weather event La Nina and a negative Indian Ocean Dipole, or a change of temperatures over the ocean, "may have produced ocean temperatures and atmospheric circulations that made an event like this more likely," Schreck added.

Any storm that can remain at such a "strong intensity for so long and make two landfalls is important in terms of human impacts and in terms of science," said Kristen Corbosiero, professor of atmospheric and environmental sciences at the University of Albany.

"Intense storms generally go through a series of eye-wall replacement cycles and intensity fluctuations," where the cyclone begins to develop a new eye, Corbosiero said. "But Freddy didn't have these cycles for most of its life cycle. Trying to understand why, will be a good research topic." □



Muqtada Haider turns the switches to transfer electricity to private homes in Baghdad, Iraq, on Sept. 10, 2021.

Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq's prime minister Sunday promised sweeping measures to tackle climate change — which has af-

fecting millions across the country — including plans to meet a third of the country's electricity demands using renewable energy.

Iraqi PM promises action to tackle crippling climate change

Climate change for years has compounded the woes of the troubled country. Droughts and increased water salinity have destroyed crops, animals and farms and dried up entire bodies of water. Hospitals have faced waves of patients with respiratory illnesses caused by rampant sandstorms. Climate change has also played a role in Iraq's ongoing struggle to combat cholera.

"More than seven million citizens have been affected in Iraq ... and hundreds of thousands have been displaced because

they lost their livelihoods that rely on agriculture and hunting," Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said in a speech to open the two-day Iraq Climate Conference in Basra.

Al-Sudani said the Iraqi government is working on a national plan to tackle climate change that consists of a series of measures it hopes to take by 2030. The plan includes building renewable energy plants, modernizing inefficient and outdated irrigation techniques, reducing carbon emissions, combating desertification, and protect-

ing the country's biodiversity.

Among the projects is a massive afforestation initiative, where Iraq would plant 5 million trees across the country. Iraq also hopes to provide one-third of the country's electricity demand through renewable energy instead of fossil fuel. Al-Sudani said he is hoping to organize a regional conference on climate change in Baghdad in the near future as well.

Developments in neighboring countries have also compounded Iraq's water woes. □



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Aruba signs agreement with the United Kingdom



(Oranjestad)—Recently, Aruba has signed a bilateral agreement (MoU) with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This was an agreement between Directie Luchtvaart Aruba and the civil aviation authority in the UK. This includes an agreement related to air transport that regulates the rights of air transport from both nations' airlines on the route between the island and the countries across the pond.

The agreement follows the principles of "open skies", which is a liberal management without restrictions and limitations in regards to capacity and frequency of airline flights. This is the most effective managements to maximize airlift, which is very important for Aruba's

tourism. It is also worth noting that the signed agreement will open doors for direct flights between Aruba and the UK—due March 26th of this year. British Airways will conduct its first flight between London Gatwick and Aruba.

Subsequently, Aruba will follow the process with authorities from the UK to convert this agreement into a treaty.

This agreement is a part of the strategy by the Ministry of Transport in its efforts to further expand Aruba's infrastructure of bilateral agreements for air transport, so as to create more possibilities for airlift and connection, which in turn will generate and stimulate economic development. □

Tree years after the Covid-19 pandemic started, we still need to stay alert

(Oranjestad)—It has already been 3 years since the world was introduced to the Covid-19 pandemic. On Aruba, the first few cases were reported in March 2020 and for two long years, the pandemic had a big impact on the Aruban community. Three years later and Aruba's economy is barely recovering from this hit.

44,044: that's the number of confirmed Covid-19 cases on the island so far. 282 people have lost their lives because of it. Even though the spread has minimized significantly on the island, the virus is still present and the last registered cases—a total of 18—were in the week of February 20th, according to the World Health Organization. WHO also indicated that the number of vaccine dosage administered on the island is at 216,561.

Yesterday, the Pan American Health Organization held a press conference commemorating the 3 years of the presence of Covid-19 around the world. The

director of PAHO, Dr. Jarbas Barbosa, called on every country to fortify their surveillance and try to close the gaps in the administration of vaccines in order to end the emergence and to prepare for other possible health crises in the future.

In the last 3 years, the American continents has had more than 190.3 million cases of Covid-19 and more than 2.9 million deaths, which accounts for 25% and 43% of the global population respectively. Barbosa remarked: "The pandemic highlighted that no country or organization was ready for the impact that this pandemic had." This includes the American continents marked for inequality.

Despite the improvements and developments, Barbosa warns that the Covid-19 virus is still very much present and it still has to establish itself into a predictable pattern. He added that during the last month, the continents of America saw more than 1.5 million cases and 17,000 deaths. □



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Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitor at Casa Del Mar Beach Resort



The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure to recognize a Distinguished Visitor of Aruba. This visitor was respectfully honored with a certificate acknowledging his years of visits, loyalty, and love to the island of Aruba.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by Mr. O'Connor were:

- Family fun
- Aruba's delicious variety of foods
- "Everything is always wonderful in Aruba" ☐
- Year-round sunny weather
- Aruba's white sandy beaches

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests whom have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honoree was: Distinguished Visitor of Aruba **Mr. Kevin O'Connor from Massachusetts, United States.**

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Casa Del Mar Beach Resort bestowed the Distinguished Visitor Certification to the honoree, presented him with gifts, and also thanked him for choosing Aruba as his favorite vacation destination and as his home-away-from-home.



Sea turtle conservation by Turtugaruba Foundation



ORANJESTAD — Turtugaruba was founded on September 3rd, 2003 by a group of enthusiastic volunteers. Ten years earlier, in 1993, a Sea Turtle Recovery Action Plan (STRAP) was introduced in Aruba and the rest of the Caribbean as an initiative of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). Tom Barmes, who was working at DLVV (Department of Agriculture, Husbandry and Fishery) was one of the writers of the STRAP for Aruba, together with Karen Eckert, director of WIDECAST (Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network). This is how sea turtle conservation started on the island following a plan that is still complied with today.

Tom formed a group of volunteers around him, because nature does not know office hours, like an organization such as DLVV. This group of volunteers used the name Widecast Aruba and today there are still a few of them active. They first started protecting the Leatherback Sea Turtle nests on Palm Beach and Eagle Beach. This group also investigated which other species of sea turtles use

Aruba as their nesting habitat and which beaches are used by them. For a period of 25 years a study has been conducted in which every early morning the beach was being monitored in which now there is a good overview of sea turtle nesting activities.

There are 4 different sea turtle species that visit Aruba to lay their eggs, each with their own specific season:

- Leatherback Sea Turtle - Lederschildpad
- Driekiel (March – September)
- Loggerhead Sea Turtle - Dikkopschildpad
- Cawama (May – September)
- Hawksbill Sea Turtle - Karetschildpad - Caret (June – December)
- Green Turtle - Soepschildpad - Turtuga Blanco (July-November)

There also came a better understanding and overview of the biggest threats to the sea turtles existence in Aruba and how these problems should be tackled. Despite hard work, all those years, most problems have not really gone away, but luckily and thanks to the enormous efforts from the volunteers, the sea turtles are still here. On Aruba the sea turtles are threatened with extinction by pollution, driving on dunes and beaches with quads and 4x4's and the loss of nesting beaches due to coastal development on behalf of tourism. Because coastal development comes with artificial light and artificial light is a mayor issue for sea turtles, mother turtle usually comes on shore at night looking for a dark beach to make her nest. However... a dark beach is hard to find here nowadays. Light causes stress and can result in her returning to the sea without laying her eggs. Artificial light causes disorientation for the baby sea turtles (hatchlings).

They crawl towards artificial light sources (like streetlights, hotel lights, etc.) and then they don't find the sea. In the 90's it was still a common occurrence to find a complete nest of about 70 hatchlings on the streets, dead, as cars drove over them. Thanks to their protection methods and a lot of time and effort, the volunteers of Turtugaruba have managed to get this under control. But for a sustainable solution there must be less light visible on the beaches and a strict regulation of it. Sea turtles sim-

ply need dark nesting beaches for their survival. It is clear that even more coastal development would not make the situation better for the sea turtles. Again, more hotel rooms? And even busier beaches? These are choices Aruba has to make. Do we want to leave a place for the sea turtles? Not only Aruba, but the entire world needs sea turtles! Sea turtles play a vital role in keeping our oceans healthy.

The Green Turtle, for example, keeps the sea grasses on the bottom of the sea short and therefore a healthy place for many fish to deposit their eggs. The Leatherback, the largest turtle of the world, eats mainly jellyfish and helps maintain the balance between jellyfish and plankton. Despite the threats that exist on Aruba, the turtles still keep coming. That's why today Turtugaruba is especially proud of the volunteers and the many people and organizations of our community that carry a warm place in their hearts for the sea turtles. All four species are active now, which means all hands on deck in the field for us, the volunteers. We strive to keep the sea turtles, our oldest 'repeat guests', always coming back to Aruba and get the chance to reproduce here.

What you can do to protect the sea turtles

- Lights out for sea turtles.
- Do not drive on beaches.
- Do not litter. Do not leave any plastic cups, straws or bags on the beach.
- Remove obstacles from the beach.
- Do not disturb a nesting sea turtle. Do not attempt to touch the turtle but stay at a respectful distance (at least 10 meters).
- Do call Turtugaruba (24 hour Turtle Hotline: (297) 5929393).

For more information visit the facebook page Turtugaruba Foundation. 





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Chef Ever de Peña: "I love to tell stories through my cooking"

Ever de Peña, a professional chef who is only 36 years old, is preparing to open his own restaurant soon. After a long trajectory, different experiences and competitions, Ever is ready to tell a story through his cooking. In an interview with Bon Dia Aruba, Ever shared how he found his passion for cooking and how he came to the decision to have his own restaurant.

Ever shared how he started his studies at the EPB secondary school. Afterwards, he graduated to the EPI University and he always stayed working in hospitality and tourism. He finished university with an Associate Degree in three years, during which he worked and went to school. He worked at the Calypso restaurant at the Casa Del Mar hotel. After Casa Del Mar, Ever started a new job at the Renaissance Hotel.

Ever graduated top of his class. Afterwards, he stayed at the university and followed another course called EAI, which is a level higher.

He further shared that after his time at the Renaissance hotel, he worked at Cooks Restaurant downtown. While he was working there, he was also studying abroad, in places like California and even Italy.

During his time at Cooks Restaurant, Ever joined in a culinary competition at EPI and won. After he graduated from the university a second time, he went to work at the Manchebo Hotel, where he started out as a Sous Chef. After two years, he was promoted to Executive Chef, the youngest one on the island.

In 2016, Ever competed for the title of Iron Chef in Aruba, going up against other chefs from Marriott and Ritz Carlton hotels. It was during this competition that he formed a friendship with the Executive Chef of Marriott, who offered him the job of Executive Sous Chef. It was with this offer that Ever left Manchebo and started working at Marriott that same year.

"The good thing about



Marriott is that every year I would travel twice a year, and we would also bring foreign chefs in our kitchen. While I was working at Manchebo, I also traveled a few times to represent the hotel," he said.

Four years ago, Ever's ex-boss left Marriott and opened his own restaurant. Two years ago he offered Ever the opportunity to open another one with him: "I kept thinking about it and I think that now is the time to do it. That's what I'm working on right now, actually."

Ever shared that he did not always have a passion for cooking. His love grew throughout the years he experienced what it was like to be a chef: "I remem-

ber when I was at EPI and I told my mentor that I just wanted my diploma, so that I could live in another country and be a hotel manager. But when I started working as a chef, I just fell in love with it. One thing led to another and I don't think there's anything I love more than cooking now," he expressed.

He noted that even though he does not have a favorite dish, he loves working with seafood, fish especially, than anything else: "I think fish is so versatile compared to beef. I don't have any specific favorites, but I love cooking with quality ingredients to get the best flavors out of them," he said.

In terms of his experiences

competing, Ever shared that he loved it, and that he is disappointed that there has not been another cooking competition in Aruba for more than five years now.

"I think it's a great thing to do as a chef, and as a student, you learn a lot. The culinary world can be very stressful and I think a competition can help you calm down. I competed four times and I always had a blast, not because I won, but the overall experience was great."

In terms of his restaurant that is opening soon, Ever shared that it would be a small place, with room for 24 people, plus an extra 16

at the bar. He explained that the reason behind the limited seating is so he could tell a story through his cooking: "I think with this concept, I can make 16 people happy all night. It's a space where I can express myself through the food," he added.

Lastly, Ever wants to send a message for the Aruban community, especially the younger generation who are still looking for their passion in life: "My message is that it doesn't matter what you end up doing, do it with passion. I remember my mother telling me that it doesn't matter if I end up picking up trash, or whatever, just do it like you love it. That's my advice." □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 41 Collec-
1 Party
spread

5 Los

Angeles
football
team

9 Minly
drink

10 Clapton
and Idle

12 "A miss is
as good
as —"

13 Steak cut

14 Friend of
Pooh

16 Genetic
stuff

17 Needing a
massage

18 Billfold

21 Tennis
need

22 Rots

23 Parking
pro

24 Wolfs
(down)

26 Sack

29 Spectrum
color

30 Long story

31 In the past

32 Ophelia's
love

34 Bay

37 Creator
of Pooh

38 Stable
sound

39 Novel
ideas

40 Venetian
magistrate

DOWN

1 Volcanic
rock

2 Step
down

3 Tube,
to Brits

4 Fencing
sword

5 Game
official

6 Onassis
nickname

7 Somewhat

8 Play parts

9 Osaka
setting

11 ERA or
RBI

15 Shake-
speare's
"— Night"



Saturday's answer

19 High

20 Back

22 Be

23 Kilmer

24 Endorsed

25 "Gang-

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Paradise"

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26 Spot for

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27 FBI em-

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28 Airport

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29 Conceited

30 Amused

expression

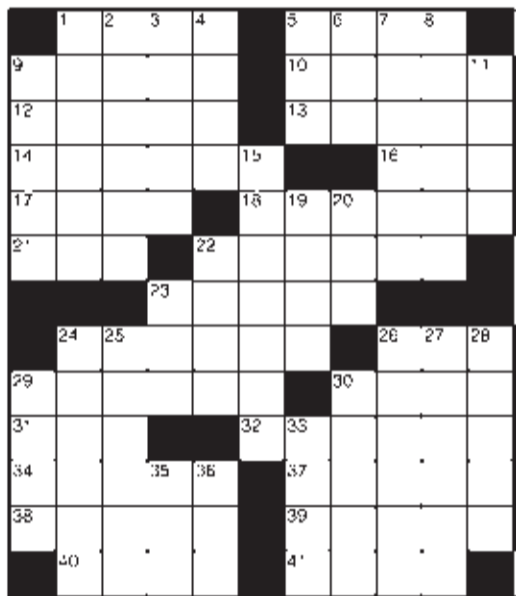
33 Band

boosters

35 Nest item

36 English

article



Prostate cancer treatment can wait for most men, study finds

By CARLA K. JOHNSON
AP Medical Writer

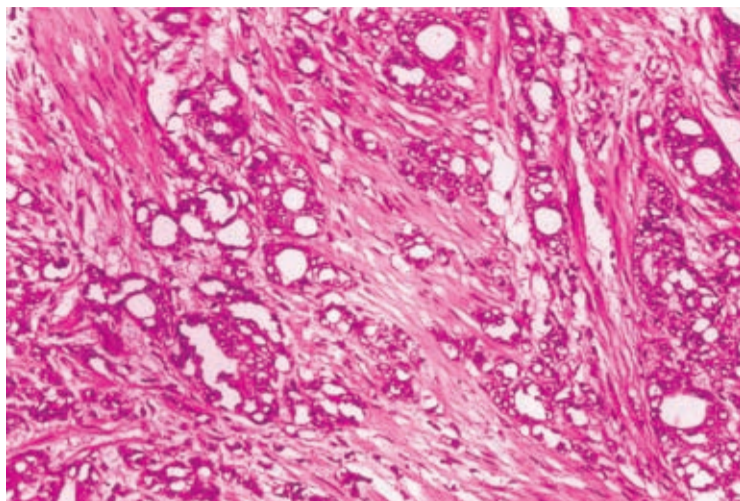
Researchers have found long-term evidence that actively monitoring localized prostate cancer is a safe alternative to immediate surgery or radiation. The results, released Saturday, are encouraging for men who want to avoid treatment-related sexual and incontinence problems, said Dr. Stacy Loeb, a prostate cancer specialist at NYU Langone Health who was not involved in the research.

The study directly compared the three approaches — surgery to remove tumors, radiation treatment and monitoring. Most prostate cancer grows slowly, so it takes many years to look at the disease's outcomes.

"There was no difference in prostate cancer mortality at 15 years between the groups," Loeb said. And prostate cancer survival for all three groups was high — 97% regardless of treatment approach. "That's also very good news."

The results were published Saturday in the New England Journal of Medicine and presented at a European Association of Urology conference in Milan, Italy. Britain's National Institute for Health and Care Research paid for the research.

Men diagnosed with localized prostate cancer



This 1974 microscope image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows changes in cells indicative of adenocarcinoma of the prostate.

shouldn't panic or rush treatment decisions, said lead author Dr. Freddie Hamdy of the University of Oxford. Instead, they should "consider carefully the possible benefits and harms caused by the treatment options."

A small number of men with high-risk or more advanced disease do need urgent treatments, he added.

Researchers followed more than 1,600 U.K. men who agreed to be randomly assigned to get surgery, radiation or active monitoring. The patients' cancer was confined to the prostate, a walnut-sized gland that's part of the reproductive system. Men in the monitoring group had regular blood tests and some went on to have surgery or radiation.

Death from prostate cancer

occurred in 3.1% of the active-monitoring group, 2.2% in the surgery group,

Associated Press

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and 2.9% in the radiation group, differences considered statistically insignificant.

At 15 years, cancer had spread in 9.4% of the active-monitoring group, 4.7% of the surgery group and 5% of the radiation group. The study was started in 1999, and experts said today's monitoring practices are better, with MRI imaging and gene tests guiding decisions. □



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'Not done yet:' Skier Shiffrin continues quest for records

By ERIC WILLEMSSEN

Associated Press

Does getting a record 87th World Cup win make Mikaela Shiffrin the greatest ski racer of all time?

Shiffrin doesn't think so, despite congratulations pouring in from the likes of tennis stars Roger Federer and Iga Swiatek, actress Kate Winslet, and fellow skiing standouts Lindsey Vonn and Bode Miller.

In fact, Shiffrin laughs off the G.O.A.T. talk.

"Because all I can really see in my mind is an image of a baby goat, or like a fainting goat. That's what comes in my head," Shiffrin said after surpassing Swedish great Ingemar Stenmark as the winningest ski racer in the 56-year-history of Alpine skiing's World Cup.

"That image is sort of scarred into my mind and the first thing I think about when I hear people say 'G.O.A.T.', I just kind of laugh."

"After all these years racing and getting to this point now, I realize no matter what I accomplish, people root for who they want to win – for whatever reason," she said.

"It could be something that doesn't have anything to do with me, or doesn't have anything to do with



The winner United States' Mikaela Shiffrin celebrates with the team after an alpine ski, women's World Cup slalom, in Are, Sweden, Saturday, March 11, 2023.

Associated Press

Ingemar, or Lindsey, or Marcel (Hirscher), or Bode, or whoever. It is a personal thing, and that's what is so beautiful about sport."

Shiffrin won Saturday's slalom in Are in Stenmark's native Sweden to break the 34-year-old record, which is comparable with a tennis player earning a 25th major singles title to surpass Australian great Margaret Court, who for five decades has held the record of 24 titles.

Another comparison under-

lines Shiffrin's dominance of her sport. In the time since her first victory on December 20, 2012, Shiffrin won more than twice as many World Cup races as the entire Austria women's ski team, which has managed 43 victories.

With Shiffrin turning 28 Monday, the American is bound to add to her tally of 87 and other milestones will come her way.

"I think she can win more than 100," Stenmark said in a recent interview with The

Associated Press.

"100 or more," was also the prediction of Austrian former slalom specialist Marlies Raich, one of Shiffrin's early idols.

Best marks are also on the cards for Shiffrin when it comes to the number of crystal globes – the award for winning the season discipline or overall title.

By winning the overall, slalom and GS titles this season, Shiffrin has extended her collection to 15 globes – five short of Vonn's 20.

Shiffrin, with seven slalom globes, is one short of Vonn and Stenmark, who each had eight titles in a single discipline — Vonn in downhill, Stenmark in both slalom and GS. Also, Shiffrin's five overall titles rank her one behind the women's record of six, set by Annemarie Moser-Proell in the 1970s. Across genders, Shiffrin still needs three more to match another Austrian standout, Marcel Hirscher, who racked up eight men's overall titles in a row from 2012-19.

Away from World Cup racing, two-time Olympic champion Shiffrin has nine gold medals and 17 in total from major championships. She won't be able to add to those for nearly two more years, with the 2025 world championships in Saalbach, Austria, and the 2026 Milan-Cortina Olympics next up.

Despite setting many of the sport's records, Shiffrin said she still feels "that anticipation, that nervousness, that I want to race."

"For me that is a sign I have no lack of motivation," she said. "It's the skiing that I want to do. Every day I wake up and want to do it, again and again. That is not done yet, it's stronger than ever." □



Los Angeles Rams cornerback Jalen Ramsey (5) stands on the field before an NFL football game against the Seattle Seahawks on Jan. 8, 2023, in Seattle.

Associated Press

By ALANIS THAMES

AP Sports Writer

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP)

— The Miami Dolphins are acquiring All-Pro cornerback Jalen Ramsey in a trade with the Los Angeles Rams, two people with knowledge of the deal told

The Associated Press on Sunday.

The Rams will get Miami's third-round pick in the 2023 NFL draft and tight end Hunter Long, according to the people, who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because neither

AP sources: Rams trading All-Pro CB Jalen Ramsey to Dolphins

team had announced the deal.

Shortly after news of the trade broke, Ramsey indicated on social media that Miami was his preferred destination.

"I prayed for this specifically for about a month & now it's happening! @Miami-Dolphins LETSGO!" Ramsey tweeted Sunday.

The Rams went 5-12 last season and missed the playoffs just one year after winning the Super Bowl, and they've have been making changes to their roster this offseason. Los Angeles parted ways with veteran linebacker Bobby Wagner last month after one season.

The Rams traded for Ramsey in the middle of the 2019 season after he spent the first four years of his career in Jacksonville. Ramsey, a six-time Pro Bowl selection, had 77 tackles and four interceptions during the Rams' Super Bowl-winning 2021 season. Last season, he had a career-high 88 tackles and four interceptions.

Adding Ramsey is another step for Miami in rebuilding a defense that had a down year in 2022, by its standards.

After Miami finished last year ranked 18th in total defense, 24th in scoring defense and 27th against the pass, the Dolphins parted

ways with defensive coordinator Josh Boyer and brought in former Denver head coach Vic Fangio to lead the defense.

Miami needed to bolster a secondary that was decimated by injury last year and was without cornerback Byron Jones, who the team is expected to release on Wednesday, when the NFL's new year begins, in a cost-cutting move. Jones missed the entire 2022 season after undergoing Achilles surgery last March.

Ramsey is expected to play alongside Miami's Pro Bowl cornerback Xavien Howard, who had 45 tackles and an interception in 2022. □

Ohtani long HR powers Japan; Italy advances at World Classic

TOKYO (AP) — Shohei Ohtani hit a three-run homer that landed just below his image on a video advertising board, sending Japan to a 7-1 victory over Australia in the World Baseball Classic on Sunday night.

Ohtani also walked twice and finished with four RBIs. His first-inning drive traveled an estimated 448 feet.

Japan won Group B with a 4-0 record and will play a quarterfinal Wednesday against Italy, which advanced along with Cuba from Group A on tiebreakers. Matt Harvey got the win as Italy defeated the Netherlands 7-1, causing all five teams to finish 2-2.

South Korea beat the Czech Republic 7-3 in the day's other Group B game, and Cuba defeated Taiwan 7-1 in Group A.

Ohtani turned on a hanging curveball from Will Sheffield, who didn't even watch the flight of the ball into the Tokyo Dome's right-field seats, bending and putting hands on his knees. It was the first home run of the tournament for Ohtani, who is 6 for 12 with eight RBIs and seven walks.

Winner Yoshinobu Yamamoto struck out eight in four scoreless innings, allowing one hit and no walks. He threw 42 of 60 pitches for strikes, averaging 95.2 mph with his fastball and topping out at 96.9 mph. The 24-year-old right-hander was the Pacific League's MVP for the Orix Buffaloes in 2021 and 2022, and pitched a no-hitter last June 22 against the Saitama Seibu Lions.

Australia (2-1) is second in Group B, ahead of the Czechs and South Korea (both 1-2) and eliminated China (0-3). Australia would advance with a win over the Czechs on Monday, when South Korea plays China.

ISRAEL 3, NICARAGUA 1

MIAMI (AP) — Garrett Stubbs hit a two-run double in a three-run eighth inning, helping Israel rally for the win in its WBC opener. Stubbs had two of Israel's seven hits. His bases-loaded double off New York

Yankees reliever Jonathan Loáisiga drove in Spencer Horwitz and Noah Mendlinger with two out in the eighth. Horwitz tied it earlier in the inning with an RBI single.

Winner Richard Bleier had two strikeouts in one relief inning.

Nicaragua took a 1-0 lead in the fifth when Steven Leyton's double scored Sandy Bermudez. But it dropped to 0-2 in WBC pool play.

ITALY 7, NETHERLANDS 1

TAICHUNG, Taiwan (AP) — Harvey pitched four innings of one-run ball for Italy, and Milwaukee Brewers prospect Sal Frelick had three hits and two RBIs.

Italian players had to wait a few minutes after the final out to find out they advanced with Cuba while

the Netherlands, Taiwan and Panama were eliminated. The group was decided by runs allowed divided by outs, and Cuba (15/108, .139) finished first, followed by Italy (17/108, .157), Netherlands (19/102, .186), Panama (21/105, .200) and Taiwan (31/105, .295).

Chadwick Tromp homered in the third for the Netherlands, but Italy went ahead to stay with six runs in the fourth.

Nicky Lopez had two hits and two RBIs for the Italians, managed by Mike Piazza. The Netherlands, needing three runs to advance, put two on with no outs in the ninth against Mitchell Stumpo. Juremi Profar struck out, Tromp popped out to the pitcher in foul



Xander Bogaerts of the Netherlands hits the ball during the third inning of a Pool A game against Italy at the World Baseball Classic (WBC) at Taichung Intercontinental Baseball Stadium in Taichung, Taiwan, Sunday, March 12, 2023.

Associated Press

territory near the plate and Ray-Patrick Diddler struck out.

Dutch left fielder Jurickson Profar made a sprawling backhand catch on Dominic Fletcher's two-out fly in the eighth, saving two runs. Padres infielder Xander Bo-

gaerts went 4 for 15 (.267) with one RBI for the Netherlands in the tournament. Jurickson Profar was 3 for 13 (.231) with one RBI, Didi Gregorius was 3 for 12 with three RBIs and Jonathan Schoop 1 for 13 (.077) with no RBIs. □



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great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

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Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all throughout the year, and hopefully will continue to do so in the years to come. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, every to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon! ☐



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For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website **watersedge-aruba.com**

